

15 January 2008

To: SQA Co-ordinator (secondary schools,
special schools and further education colleges)
Scottish Executive
HMIE
Directors of Education
Biology Assessment Panel members
Higher Education Institutions — Department of Education
Customer Account Managers

**For the attention of all staff responsible for the delivery of
National Qualifications in Geology**

Response required ✓ Note and pass on Note — update/information only

Contact: Elaine Riley at Glasgow
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E-mail: elaine.riley@sqa.org.uk

Dear Colleague

National Qualifications update — Geology

This letter is intended to provide centres with an update on National Qualifications and should be passed to the member of staff responsible for Geology.

1. Principal Assessor reports for 2007

The Principal Assessor (PA) reports for all NQ Courses in Geology are available on SQA's website (www.sqa.org.uk).

The Principal Assessor reports include details of statistical information on entries; grade boundaries at C, B and A; and comments on candidate performance — including areas where candidates performed well in the external assessment, areas where candidates had difficulty with the external assessment and areas of common misunderstanding.

2. Question papers and marking instructions

Question papers and marking instructions for the Geology (Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2 and Higher) 2007 examinations are available on SQA's website (www.sqa.org.uk).

3. Appeals

I would like to take this opportunity to remind you of advice which centres will find helpful to refer to when preparing and collating evidence for Appeals purposes.

I would direct you to the NQ Geology subject-specific page of SQA's website (www.sqa.org.uk) and the publication *Estimates, Absentees and Assessment Appeals 2008* (BA0992, July 2007). This publication provides guidance for subject specialists in centres which are delivering National Courses.

4. Geology promotional event

SQA will be hosting a promotional event for National Courses in Geology on Friday 23 May 2008. The venue for this event is yet to be confirmed, but is likely to be in a central location.

The event is aimed at all teachers and lecturers who have an interest in Geology, whether they are currently involved in delivery of Courses in this subject area or not. The purpose of the event is to showcase SQA's Courses in Geology, illustrate good practice and offer guidance on ways in which Geology can be delivered within your centre. Entry to the event is free of charge. Booking details will be circulated to SQA Co-ordinators and posted to SQA's website as soon as these are available.

If you are interested in attending this event or sending a representative from your centre, please e-mail elaine.riley@sqa.org.uk with your name, centre name and your position within the centre. Similarly, if you have any questions about this event please feel free to contact me.

If you have already expressed an interest in this event, your details have been noted and you will be contacted once the details of the event are confirmed.

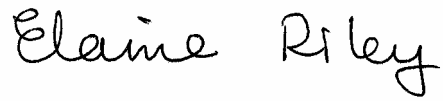
5. National Assessment Bank items — Intermediate 2

The NAB items currently available for Intermediate 2 Geology will shortly be revisited with a view to improving the accessibility of the instruments of assessment contained therein. This is likely to result in amendments to the assessments in all twenty of these NABs, in which case new versions of the NABs will be uploaded to our secure site and e-mail notification will be given to all SQA Co-ordinators.

Please note that the intention of this review is to remove any unnecessary barriers to candidate achievement. The aim will be for the adjusted NABs to offer a fairer and more accessible assessment experience to Intermediate 2 Geology candidates.

I hope the contents of this letter are helpful to you. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need further clarification.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elaine Riley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a light grey shadow effect behind the text.

Elaine Riley
Qualifications Manager
Performing Arts, Languages, Mathematics and Science Team